

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 03160 210333 Z

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3262

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: MASS PFOR IN PAK

SUBJECT: ARMS AND AID: FURTHER INDIAN REACTION

REF: NEW DELHI 3089 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: IN ABSENCE FURTHER OFFICIAL COMMENT, PREDICTABLY
NEGATIVE BUT NONETHELESS RESTRAINED SPECULATION ON IMPLICATIONS
OF US ARMS/ AID DECISIONS HAS CONTINUED, THEMES BEING QUESTIONS
ON TIMING, " EQUATION" OF INDIA/ PAKISTAN, EFFECT ON PAK INTERNAL/
EXTERNAL POLITICS, WORRY ABOUT ARMS THROUGH IRAN. PRESS TRUST
OF INDIA (PTI) STORY ON STRENGTHENING OF PAK MILITARY RECEIVED
WIDE PLAY. FOREIGN
REACTION NOTED. INDIANS AND FOREIGNERS HERE PROBED FOR DETAILS
ON DECISIONS, THE FORMER REFLECTING CONCERN BUT NOT HOSTILITY.
END SUMMARY.

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1. DESPITE "HOLI" HOLIDAY WEEKEND, SPECULATION ON IMPLICATIONS OF US ARMS/ AID DECISIONS CONTINUED. NO FURTHER OFFICIAL STATEMENTS APPEARED. PRIMIN, IN INTERVIEW WITH HINDUSTHAN STANDARD PUBLISHED MARCH 18, COMMENTED RETROSPECTIVELY ONLY THAT 1971 WAR " COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED HAD THE WORLD TAKEN SOME OF THE STEPS I PUT TO THEM." HER FAMILY PAPER, NATIONAL HERALD, CARRIED " NEWS" STORY CLAIMING GOI, CONGRESS MPS OPPOSED TO ACCEPTING \$87.6 MILLION IF IT WAS TO " BE EQUATED WITH MILITARY ASSISTANCE" TO PAKISTAN (FINANCE MINISTER CHAVAN WELCOMED AID MRCH 20 SEPTCL.). NATIONALIST MOTHERLAND COLUMNIST SAID US " PLAYING PAKISTAN AGAINST INDIA"; MOTHERLAND AGAIN CALLED ON GOI TO REJECT AID. HINUDSTAN TIMES' COLUMNIST A. HARIHARAN SAID US NOT RPT NOT EQUATING TWO COUNTRIES; HE SAW " LOADED DISCRIMINATION" IN FAVOR OF PAKISTAN IN RECENT USG STATEMENTS. HARIHARAN DID ADMIT POSSIBILITY " INDIA MAY OVERREACT TO LATEST US INTERVENTION" IN SOUTH ASIA. CENTRIST STATESMAN CALLED ON INDIA TO " PLAY IT COOL." ACCEPT \$87.6 MILLION SINCE IT RAISES " NO MAJOR ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE," BUT KEEP FUTURE US AID WITHIN BOUNDS.

2. SEVERAL COLUMNISTS POSTIFICATED. SUNDAY STANDARD (ESPRESS) WRITER C. S. PANDIT SPECULATED THAT " DRAMATIC" US MOVES DESIGNED " NOT TO ALLOW EXPECTED STRONG INDIAN REACTION... TO CRYSTALIZE;" TAKING GENERALLY NEGATIVE VIEW OF US DECISIONS, HE CONCLUDED THAT AS LONG AS MUTUAL SUSPICIONS PERSIST, ADMUSTMENT OF INDO-US RELATIONS ON EQUAL/ MUTUAL INTERESTS BASIS WOULD BE " DIFFICULT." FROM WASHINGTON, EXPRESS' PARASURAM " KICKS AND KISSES" SAID EVENTS " MOVED WITH BEWILDERING RAPIDITY TOWARDS NEW AMERICAN EQUILIBRIUM" ON SUB- CONTINENT, DREW DISTINCTION BETWEEN AMBASADOR' S ASSURANCES ON NO/ NO FUTURE LETHAL ARMS SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN AND LESS CLEAR WASHINGTON (BRAY) STANCE, AND WORRIED ABOUT ARS TO PAKISTAN THROUGH IRAN. SAGAR (HINDU) REPORTED SISCO TELLING JHA US " WOULD NOT ENTERTAIN ANY MORE ORDERS FROM PAKISTAN FOR MILITARY SUPPLIES," ALTHOUGH BRAY LESS CATEGORICAL. IN MOST HELPFUL PLACE, TIMES OF INDIA' S GIRILAL JAIN SAID US DECISIONS

" NO MORE REPETITION OF OLD STORY," NOTED US SEEKS NO BASES IN AREA, US CONGRESS WOULD NOT BACK LARGE ARMS SHIPMENTS TO PAKISTAN, AND USG AWARE DIMINISHED PAKISTAN CANNOT MATCH INDIAN STRENGTH. JAIN WORRIED ABOUT US PROMOTION IRAN AS SUCCESSOR TO UK IN PERSIAN GULF, IF THAT LED TO KRANO- PAKISTANI COORDINATION OF THEIR MILITARY STRATEGY.

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3. CRITICAL NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL SUMMARIZED PROMINENTLY,

AS WERE KOSYGIN' S TEHRAN REMARKS AGAINST ARMS RACE IN ASIA.
HINUSTAN TIMES FRONTPAGE PIECE ON EDITORIAL IN KATHMANDU' S
SEMI- OFFICIAL RISNG NEPAL TO EFFECT GOI OVER- REACTED TO US
DECISIONS, WHICH COULD NOT RPT NOT UPSET SOUTH ASIA POWER BALANCE.
FROM MOSCOW, CONGRESS PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY YADAV' S STATE-
MENTS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE FRONT GROUP ON " IMPERIALISM" AND
ITS DESIRE FOMENT ASIAN TENSION THROUGH ARMS SALES (NO COUNTRY
NAMED) NOTED.

4. NEARLY ALL PAPERS PROMINENTLY CARRIED PTI PIECE MARCH 19
(PROBABLY INSPIRED BY DEFENSE MINISTRY) WHICH SAID 8 OF 14 PAK
AIR FORCE SQUADRONS WILL BE MORE SERVICEABLE AFTER \$1.1 MILLION
IN PARTS RECEIVED (SOURCE PROBABLY ALLUDED TO REOPENING OF SPARE
PARTS PIPELINE AND INTERVIEWER MISUNDERSTOOD), ARMY MOBILITY
WILL BE " IMPROVED" BY APC' S AND PAK ARMED FORCES SUPPLIED 75
PERCENT BY US, 25 PERCENT BY CHINA. SHORT ITMES IN VARIOUS
PAPERS SPLIT ABOUT EVENLY ON WHETHER GOI WOULD ACCEPT RADAR/
COMMODITY AID.

5. DURING SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS OVER WEEKEND, POLITCIANS/ PRESSMEN/
DIPLOMATS SOUGHT CLARIFICATIONS REGARDING US DECISIONS. SEVERAL
SAW GOI RESPONSE AS LESS ANTAGONISTIC THAN MIGHT BE EXPECTED.
SOME OBJECTED TO PRESIDENT' S APPARENT PUBLIC EQUATION OF ARMS
AND AID, AND EXPRESSED CONFUSION AND DISMAY ABOUT TIMING OF
DECISIONS. EMBOFFS EMPHASIZED THAT USG STILL STRONGLY SUPPORTED
SIMLA PROCESS AND WAS ONLY WIPING SLATE CLEAN. LISTENERS
VOICED CONCERN ABOUT EFFECT ARMS SUPPLIES ON PAK STANCE, ADOPTED
" WAIT AND SEE" ATTITUDE IN FACE EMBOFF ASSURANCES WE RETURNING TO
STRICT APPLICATION 1967 POLICY.
MOYNIHAN

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